

A BILL TO AMEND TITLE 38, U.S.C., TO PROVIDE FOR CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO THE IMMUNIZATION OF VETERANS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

### HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 10, 2010*

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, today, I am introducing the "Access to Appropriate Immunizations for Veterans Act of 2010" which I believe would help advance the goal we all share of promoting lifelong health for the men and women who fought for our freedom.

While the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, health care system is doing an admirable job of caring for those who bore the burden of combat, continual reform is needed to ensure the care veterans receive represents the most up-to-date practices and procedures.

According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control, CDC, each year approximately 70,000 adult Americans die from vaccine-preventable diseases. Influenza alone is responsible for over one million ambulatory care visits, 200,000 hospitalizations and 30,000 deaths.

Many of our veterans who are in the "high-risk" category of contracting vaccine-preventable diseases—including those with HIV, Hepatitis C, and substance use disorder—are enrolled in the VA health care system and could particularly benefit from receiving vaccinations.

Commendably, the VA has protocols in place that recommend vaccines as protection against deadly viruses. However, VA only has established performance measures for two vaccines making it unclear if protocols are being routinely enforced for all CDC recommended vaccines.

The tremendous value performance measures have regarding the increased utilization and effectiveness of vaccination distribution is evidenced by VA's own application of performance measures for the influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations. When these performance measures were initially applied, VA saw vaccination rates rise respectively from 27 percent and 26 percent to 77 percent and 80 percent. It also resulted in a 50 percent decline in pneumonia hospitalization rates.

The legislation I am introducing today would expand VA performance measures to cover all vaccinations recommended by the VA and CDC and ensure that veterans receive appropriate immunizations at the time suggested by the CDC. It would also require VA to report to Congress on their progress in supporting vaccinations in the veteran population.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with me in cosponsoring the Access to Appropriate Immunizations for Veterans Act of 2010. This legislation would ensure that our veterans are receiving timely and suitable access to vaccines and prevent those under the care of the VA from being unnecessarily exposed to vaccine preventable diseases.

NORTH DAVIDSON WINS SOFTBALL TITLE WITH PERFECT SEASON

### HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 10, 2010*

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we wish to extend our congratulations to the North Davidson softball team for its perfect season culminated by winning the North Carolina High School Athletic Association's 4-A state softball championship. North Davidson finished as the runner-up 3 out of the last 4 years, but this year they were able to win it all. The championship game concluded the Black Knight's 32-game perfect season.

As a result of the tremendous athleticism of the players, the outstanding direction of coach Mike Lambros, and the unyielding support of the community, the Black Knights had all the components necessary to clinch the State title. Furthermore, this was a particularly special season for coach Lambros who celebrated his first championship after having coached the Black Knights for 30 years.

The Black Knight's star pitcher Hannah Alexander won most valuable player honors for her tremendous contribution to her team's success. She only allowed two runs during the entire playoffs. This championship game required tremendous amounts of teamwork and determination.

The championship team members included: Amelia Griffin, Allie Nicholson, Paige Wall, Kathy Choplin, Tess Swing, Nichole Tuttle, Jessica Plemmons, Shaundee Woosley, Lauren Grooms, Jordan Clodfelter, Lindy Yount, Hannah Alexander, Morgan Koontz, Tori Hedrick, Courtney Walker, Maggie McDowell, Mackenzie Hauser, Robyn Stanek, Missy Hunt, Eliza Davis, Kayla Harrell, Lauren Beaver, Katie Vick, Samantha Honeycutt, Lauren McNeerney. Assisting head coach Mike Lambros on his championship run were Lamar Powell, Billy Gerald, Thomas Vick, Ronnie Plemmons, Jason Martin, Keith Stanek, Ben Lookabill, Blythe Craver, Kendra Israel, Jerry Smith, Jason Israel, Jeff Pace, Charlie Nicholson, and Tim Martin.

Again, on behalf of the Sixth District of North Carolina, we would like to congratulate the North Davidson softball team, the faculty, staff, students and fans for an outstanding season.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011

SPEECH OF

### HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 2010*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5136) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2011 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes:

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Chair, Last week, the House of Representatives considered an amendment offered by Congressman

PATRICK MURPHY to H.R. 5136, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011, to repeal the Armed Forces personnel policy of "don't ask, don't tell." Due to a death in the family, I was not present for the vote on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted against this amendment.

While I believe no American should be denied the ability to serve their country because of their sexual orientation, it is important to balance this commitment to serve with the practical implications of this dramatic policy change.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates and the Joint Chiefs of Staff repeatedly asked Congress to allow the Department of Defense the time to complete its comprehensive review of "don't ask, don't tell" before taking legislative action to change this policy. These requests were denied by the Majority, whose actions imply that Members of Congress are in a better position to determine personnel policies than military leaders themselves.

We have a responsibility to consider the views of those men and women in uniform, and a duty to allow the leaders of our Armed Forces to finish their review before taking premature legislative action. By refusing to take into consideration the ongoing review by the Department of Defense, the Majority risks undermining the relationship between our elected leaders and the men and women serving our Nation. I have serious concerns with the potential for this preemptive decision to negatively impact our military's ability to recruit, retain, and ready servicemembers now and in the future.

TRIBUTE TO LATE TOM LARDNER

### HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 10, 2010*

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I recognize the life and passing of Tom Lardner. I have known this accomplished person for a long time. He was a visionary who was not afraid to take risks. We have lost a great businessman, an exceptional husband and terrific father.

Tom Lardner, born in Port Huron, Michigan earned his bachelor's degree in business from Michigan State University. Mr. Lardner earned a master's degree in education from Michigan State. Before beginning his real estate career he was a coach at St. Gabriel High School football team in East Lansing, Michigan where he also served as a history teacher.

While running his real estate investment firm, Lehnndorff USA, in Chicago he spotted the potential of the area just north of the central business district in Dallas, Texas. Eager to map out his plans he moved to Dallas. He then saw his dream transforming into reality after years of hard work with the construction of a luxury apartment building, which would be the earliest of many.

Lardner purchased a large amount of the land surrounded by McKinney Avenue, Pearl Street, Woodall Rodgers Freeway and North Central Expressway for development. He also worked alongside city officials to establish a tax increment financing district that would pay for street improvements as well as other infrastructure improvements.